

HESPER

...BY...

HAMLIN GARLAND

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CHAPTER XIV.

AT 2:30, prompt as a groom, Raymond brought the horses round to the door. Midwinter though it was, the sun was clear and warm, and as they went winding down the trail to the southwest Ann exclaimed over the exquisite quality of the air, the crystalline clarity of the distant peaks and the cloudless serenity of the sky.

After a short and steep descent they came out into a wagon road and were able to ride side by side.

"You must be prepared for very poor goods and very small stores," said Rob. "Bozle is by no means to be compared even with Valley Springs. Everything is temporary. No one really intends to live there; they are all just staying, and I fear the millinery is not of the latest fashion."

"What a power lies in the idea of gold! See the people who have come from all over the world! Don't tell me that every European language is spoken here. Did I see Perry, the Mexican boy, at your cabin this morning?" "Yes, Perry is here, and so is Baker. You have cause to remember Baker."

When they entered the town Ann said: "Please take me to a shop where I can get some chairs and a small table. I am going to present Mrs. Kelly with an easy chair."

"Very well," said he. "I know the very place, but please do not go about the streets alone. Of course you are perfectly safe, but you are a stranger and might wander into the wrong doors. Wait till I tie the horses and do one or two errands, then I will join you, and we can go where you please."

"Very well," she replied, with a feeling of pleasure in his care of her. "I will wait to visit several shops."

When Raymond returned for Ann, whom he had left at a furniture shop, he was filled with anxiety. The street was full of men drawn together by a report that the sheriff had stolen a march on Skytown and was already on his way to intimidate Bozle and demand those for whom his warrants called. Horsemen were galloping up the hill to warn the miners, and the chief of police and mayor were mingling with the growing throng, pleading for peace. The whole camp resembled a nest of ants into which an ox had planted a hoof.

Ann observed Raymond's abstraction and restlessness and asked, "Are you in haste to return?"

He answered quite calmly: "Yes, we ought to start back as soon as we can. I am going after the horses. Please remain here until I get back."

When Raymond returned the second time he was breathing rapidly. "Some one has borrowed our horses," he explained quietly, "and I must ask you to wait a little longer while I secure another for you."

"Will they not return them?" "I am afraid not. They have probably gone up the hill to join Munro's men, and they will be returned at the stable. If you are not afraid—"

"Oh, no; I am not afraid!" He looked at her in admiration. "I don't believe you are scared. Well, now stay here till I can see what I can do about a horse."

Again Ann stood alone in the doorway, watching a group of men crouching on the flat roof of a two story building opposite. Two of them had rifles in their hands, and some man was shouting from the walk, "Keep them guns out of sight!"

The girl began to tingle with a foreknowledge of violence. As she listened a wild cry went up from the roof tops. "Here they come!"

The throng below uttered answering shouts. Men began to run to and fro aimlessly, filling the street facing to the south. In the hands of hotheads guns began to glitter. Their action was unreal, spectacular; but their voices shook her, benumbed her.

Raymond came hurrying back, his lips set and resolute, his brow frowning with anxiety. "I cannot find a horse that you can ride. I have ordered a team. We will have to go the back way to reach it."

A wider yell arose. The leaders began to run down the street which led to the south. Ann took hold of Raymond's arm with nervous clutch. "What are they going to do?"

"It's hard to tell. I wish we were safely out of this."

"Can't we run?" "Run! Dear girl, you couldn't walk four blocks in this altitude. If you will come with me we will cross to the barn and get our carriage there."

Unconsciously clinging to his arm, Ann went down the back street as in a dream.

They were already too late. The cross street was packed with men, and, looking down the hill, they saw the sheriff and his posse coming six abreast like a squad of cavalry, riding slowly up between the walls of stern and silent citizens of the great camp. Each deputy carried a rifle across the pommel of his saddle, and at their head, preceding even the sheriff, rode Matthew Kelly. His head was bare, and in his hand a long revolver gleamed. There was something in his face, in the lift of his head, that awed men. As he came he called out, not loudly, but every word could be heard: "Aisy now, boys! Respect the law. Aisy, I say! This is no fight of yours."

Down with your guns. There are women and children to think of. Kape the peace."

Raymond looked at Ann with eyes whose light amazed her. "By the Lord, I wish I were by his side!" He spoke through his set teeth.

"Go," she said. "Do not mind me. Go help him."

Her voice recalled him. "No, my place is here," and his look meant more than any word he had ever dared to speak to her.

In the square Kelly halted, and the sheriff, throwing up his hand, commanded silence. He was visibly trembling, but he blustered to his purpose. "Where is your mayor and your chief of police?"

The chief stepped forth. "Here I am! What do you want of me?"

"I want you to deliver to me the men who assaulted Mackay."

The chief waved his hand toward the hills. "They are up there; go get them!" and a roar of derisive applause went up.

Kelly raised his hand. "Boys, hear me! This is the sheriff, the properly constituted authority of this county. Be quiet, now, and listen to reason."

The sheriff, gaining courage, took up the theme. "I have no war with Bozle," he said. "I came to get the men who abused Mackay and who defied my authority."

"Well, go get them," repeated a man in the crowd. "What are you doing here? You came here to intimidate us, and you can't do it."

The crowd, moved by some sinister impulse, closed round the sheriff and Kelly, cutting them off from the main body of deputies. This movement opened a way of escape, and, expecting each moment to hear the crackle of guns, Raymond hurried Ann across the street and into the musty waiting room of the livery barn.

"Where is that team?" he shouted to a hostler who was looking out of a side door.

"The boss took it."

"Whose horse is this with the saddle on?"

The hostler looked down for a moment. "Superintendent of Loadstone." "Maynard's?"

"Yep."

"I thought so. Well, you tell him that Rob Raymond borrowed him for a lady." He turned to Ann. "Come; we must get out of this."

She obeyed like a child, all her imperious nature in subjection to his will. Lifting her to the saddle, he led the horse out the back way and through an alley into the main street and so to the hills. As they reached a fairly level spot in the trail he turned and looked back over the roofs of the houses.

"The sheriff is retreating—wherein he shows good sense." He pointed above them, where on Pine mountain Munro's vedettes stood waiting, backed by a thousand miners, jocular with battle hunger, shouting faint defiance.

"I am sorry to be such a burden to you," said Ann. "I know you longed to be there with Matthew Kelly, and I have forced you to flight."

"I will be honest. I had that impulse. You see, I've been so in the



"Boys, hear me! This is the sheriff, the properly constituted authority of this county. Be quiet, now, and listen to reason."

And then he added, "And you are more to me than any other thing in the world."

She had no reply to this, no neat turn of phrase, no smile. She looked away in silence, her breath a little troubled, her throat contracted.

In fear of the effect of his words, Raymond hastened to the impersonal. "If this trouble is turned aside it will be due to Matt."

"Why should they obey him? Is he an officer?"

"Not now, but he was the first marshal of the camp and afterward chief of police. Everybody knows him, and his influence is as great as that of any one man. His presence here today undoubtedly prevented a desperate bat-

tle."

As they neared the Kelly cabin Raymond said: "I am deeply chagrined by this experience. I really thought we were going away from disorder."

"Please do not trouble your mind with it any more," she answered decisively. "It was an experience which will give me something new to think about."

Kelly did not return till late. At about 9 o'clock he knocked at Raymond's door. "Get your gun," he said quietly. "We're on guard tonight."

And together they paced to and fro on the hillside, listening to the yells of drunken men up the street and to distant gunshots as the storm of battle swept away to the south of them. By midnight all was silent. The sheriff's forces were either repulsed or captured.

CHAPTER XV.

NOTWITHSTANDING the excitement of the day, or perhaps because of them, Ann slept soundly. She was awakened as before, by the sound of the little coffee mill, but she did not rise as promptly as on the first morning and was still dozing when Nora appeared with a piece of corn cake and a cup of coffee. "You feel tired this morning, I know. Well, now, take your breakfast in bed."

Ann was conscious smitten. "No, no! You poor, dear thing! I am ashamed to have you waiting on me."

"It's so little—a mere step or two."

"Yes, but you have so many steps. After this I forbid you doing anything of this kind for me, and I've been thinking why can't we hire a Chinaman to work for us? Unless I can do something to relieve you I will not stay. You are tired. I wish you would ask Mr. Raymond to find us a helper today."

"Hello, sis!" shouted Louis. "Aren't you up yet? You'll never make a miner." Here he poked his head in at the door. "Jupiter, wasn't yesterday an exciting day? It makes me sick to think I didn't go down to Bozle with you. Rob has been telling me about Matt's shielding the sheriff. It must have been great. I was out on the hillside. We all thought the sheriff was coming up that way, but he didn't. He turned back and went into camp, and last night Jack went down and pitched into him, and they had a battle."

"They did? Was any one killed?"

"Ten."

Nora gasped. "Merciful powers!"

"So Perry says. Our side won."

Ann frowned. "Our side! You are not taking sides with these lawless miners?"

Louis wished to sidetrack this discussion. "Our things have come."

"Have they? Very well; I'll get up at once and unpack. I want you to help me a little here."

"And I want you to help fix up our bungalow."

"Agreed. Now run away and find a hammer and some tacks."

Together they worked to render her room a little less bleak, and together they crossed the path to Raymond's cabin, where they toiled merrily. Ann was just leaving the bungalow to help Mrs. Kelly with the midday meal when Munro dashed up and flung himself from his horse.

"Good morning, Lady Ann! How fares the day?"

Something unduly presuming in his tone irritated her, and she gave him a glance intended to check and humble him. "I am quite well, thank you."

He was not of those whom disdainful eyes abase. He hugged himself and shivered comically. "Wow, but that was a cold breeze! Some one must have left the bars down. You're not going to draw the line on me, are you? What do you know against me?"

"I know nothing against you or for you either," she replied.

She was turning to go when he stopped her, and his tone was hard and dry. "You were in Bozle yesterday with Raymond. Don't do that again. When you want an escort let me know. I'll send a man that knows enough not to take a lady into danger and who has 'savvy' enough to keep his horses for the return trip."

"Thank you. You are very kind, but I'm not in need of additional protection," Ann icily replied.

"Goodbye till tomorrow," he called after her in mockery, his voice as musical as a bugle.

This interview, short as it was, left the girl with the feeling of having been grasped and shaken by a rude hand. And yet her anger was not unmixed with admiration. His magnificent audacity and the grace and dash of his advance interested her.

Raymond saw Munro riding away and wondered what his errand could have been, and when Louis told him that the gambler had stopped and detained Ann in the path his teeth set in anger. "The little hound!" he growled under his breath. "I'll put an end to that!"

Immediately upon finishing his supper he went up the path to Hanley's to find "the lookout." Munro was in his place, sitting high above his faro layout clicking a couple of silver dollars together, talking with gleeful intensity to Denver Dan, who stood at his shoulder broadly smiling. The saloon was packed with men, all in high spirits over the precipitate flight of the sheriff.

Munro sighted him at last and called out: "Hello, Rob! How goes it?"

Raymond did not reply till he reached his side. "I want to talk with you, Jack," he said in a low voice.

Munro studied him for a moment, then turned to Dan. "Take my place a minute."

Dan complied, and Raymond led the way into the open air, and when they were well out of the crowd he turned and said:

"You intercepted Miss Rupert today?"

"I met her, yes. What about it?"

"Just this. You're not fit to shake the hand of a decent girl, much less a

cultured, high bred woman like Ann Rupert, and you know it!"

Munro was staggered. "What business is it of yours?" he asked, with instant anger.

Raymond's wrath was self contained. "Keep your temper, Jack. We've summered and wintered together, and you can't make any mistakes about what I mean. I know the kind of women you live with and the kind of life you lead, and I tell you to keep away from the Kelly cabin."

Munro did not snarl as Raymond expected. His voice became softly insinuating as he said: "Suppose the lady invited me to call? Suppose she was interested in my conversation? The lady had a chance to go. The path was open, but she lingered, she smiled."

"You're a liar!"

Munro was now very confident. "Am I? Ask the boy; he saw her talking with me. I say the lady was gracious."

The gambler took on the air of an injured comrade. "Now, see here, Rob; you're away out of limits. I acknowledge I've known a whole lot of cheap women, but that's all the more reason why I should be able to tell when I meet the real thing. Her name is as safe with me as with you. Probably she's tied up back in the states anyway, so that neither of us has any chance of interesting her. But it's an open course and no favors, and so long as she doesn't hand me out the 'icy mitt' I'm going to make the most of my chance, and from this moment"—he took off his hat—"I reform, I throw up my job at Hanley's, I cut off 'booze' and I shake 'Eau Claire.'"

Raymond was impressed by his rival's manner. "You can quit gambling, and I hope you can leave liquor alone, but I see trouble when you shake Claire. But that doesn't matter. For the sake of old times I want to avoid a quarrel with you, Jack. But I warn you that if Miss Rupert finds your presence disagreeable you go, and you stay! As you say, she is probably engaged to a better man than either of us. But she is here because of the boy, and I feel a certain responsibility for them both, and the man who presumes on a chance acquaintance with her will answer to me."

"All right. Leave it to her, Rob," said Munro almost jocularly. "If she turns me down I'll pull out of my own accord, lightning sure. Good night!" Raymond walked away with a sense of failure. Munro had adroitly writhed out of his grasp and was probably exulting at his own cleverness. He was troubled, too, by the confident tone which Munro had taken in saying, "The way was open; she lingered."

Out of the tumult of his doubt he emerged with an accession of confidence in himself. "If it comes to a choice between us, my chances are as good as Jack's. Her tolerance of him is due to ignorance of his real character. Mrs. Kelly must tell her."

He saw the light in Kelly's home, and its allurements were stronger than ever before, but he resolutely held his way to his own fireside, there to bitterly muse the entire evening over his poverty and the false position in which Munro had cleverly placed him.

He repented of his resolute passing of her door when he heard next day that a couple of the independent operators had spent the entire evening with Kelly and that one of them talked a great deal to Ann. The sting of it lay in the fact that Tracy was a fine young fellow, studious and capable. "You are a fool," Raymond said to himself. "You threw away a chance to be happy. Don't do it again."

CHAPTER XVI.

NOT a day passed that the captain of the patrol did not ride down to the door of the Kelly cabin and leap from his saddle with some fanciful greeting, carefully and ornately uttered. So much he retained of his Kentucky breeding.

"The sheriff's army grows apace, but does not march," he announced one morning.

Ann could not understand this humorous defiance of law—this colossal recklessness. "What will you do when it does march?"

"Meet it and bust it."

"Tell me, now," she said to him at another time, "what is your real motive? Why should you be the champion of the rights of labor?"

He astonished her by giving back earnestness for earnestness. "I'll tell you, my lady. Labor has got to fight. This union is the coming thing. The toilers have not only got to stand together, but they've got to drill. I happen to have a little military training, and I'm going to give western labor its first lesson in the power of military organization."

"Rob and Kelly both stand for the thing that is going out. They think any man has the same chance they have, but I tell you this union that they despise is the coming order."

In truth, Kelly and Raymond were watching Munro's rise to power with growing uneasiness. He was now in almost complete control of the camp, and though he still deferred to the union and its committees, his reckless bravery, his prompt execution of orders and his knowledge of military forms had made of him the chief source of command, the only adequate regulative force on the peak. Those on the outside did not hesitate to call him "the arch devil of the district," and the whole western world was filled with his doings, his reckless speeches.

His fame had fired the hearts of all the dead shots and restless spirits of the west, and from an irregular squad of twenty-five or thirty men his forces had risen to nearly 200 heavily armed and hardly horsemen.

Raymond, though keeping keen eyes upon Munro, was unable to find cause for war in any word or act of the gambler, nor could he fathom Ann's mind either toward Munro or himself. She appeared to find Munro diverting and spoke of him only in that way. If she understood his "home life," it made no change in her attitude. It was incon-

ceivable that a refined girl should tolerate a man who passed from one ignorant and vicious woman to another, and yet Ann's greeting remained gracious, if not friendly. What it was when they were alone, he dared not think.

As for Raymond himself, he continued to punish himself by putting aside the many opportunities which came to plead his own suit, and took a morbid sort of pleasure in his renunciation. "There will be one man at least who will not persecute her," he said savagely and bent his best energies to the work of developing his mine.

One afternoon as Ann and Mrs. Kelly sat sewing and chatting together a woman suddenly appeared in the open door. She was large and high colored, her hat was awry, and there was a wild glare in her eyes and a look in her face that froze even Nora into silence. Both stared at their strange visitor in breathless apprehension till she pointed her unsteady finger at Ann and hoarsely cried out:

"So you're the one that's cut me out?" The muscles of one cheek contorted and her eyelid drooped like that of a paralytic as she fixed a baleful look on the astonished girl. After a moment's pause she stepped uncertainly upon the threshold and leaned against the jamb. "Well, you'd better watch out. If you don't give him up, I'll kill you!"

"She's crazy," whispered Nora. The intruder fumbled in her absurdly flamboyant skirt and at last drew out a pistol. "Now you better hop!" she said, with menacing calmness.

Ann rose, white and calm. "Who are you? What do you want?"

"Who am I? I'm Jack Munro's wife, that's who I am, and I want you to let him alone, that's what I want. You can understand that, can't you?" Her big, flabby face again contorted horribly.

Nora found tongue. "You go away or I'll call Matt!"

"Call him. What do I care for him? I ain't afraid of no man livin'. No, sir; let him come. But I got no war with you; you're all right. But that thing there, with her fancy dresses—I'll pink her with a bullet if she don't let my Jack alone."

If the drunken creature had swept a handful of mire into her face Ann could not have been more revolted, more degraded. Fixing a look of disdain on the woman, she said: "You are quite mistaken. Your Jack is less than nothing to me. I despise him and all he represents."

The other wildly laughed. "Ah, yes, you can talk—you're smooth—but I know!" She began to bluster. "If you hated him, why do you talk and laugh with him? I saw you yesterday." She raised the pistol. "I tell you, I'll blow you into kingdom come if you don't promise right now to give him up!"

As she advanced the two little lads at play just outside appeared in the doorway, and the sight of them steeled the little mother's heart. "Go away, darlin's," she called to them. "Quick, run for dad!"

The woman turned to see who was behind her, and the desperate Nora seized her by the wrist. "Give me the gun!" she called.

"I won't! Let go me!" shrieked the intruder, jerking hard in the effort to free her hand.

Ann seized the other arm. "I promise," she said quietly, fixing her eyes full upon those of the infuriated woman, who ceased to struggle. "Now go away."

"You promise?"

"I promise."

The woman again laughed harshly, drunkenly. "I don't trust you. I'll kill you; then I know. Let go me!" she called. "Let go or I'll smash your face!"

"Matt! Oh, Matt!" called Nora as she clung desperately to that terrible wrist.

Help came from an unexpected quarter. Like a flash, Woo, the new Chinese



"Dip it!" he curtly commanded. "Dip gun!"

cock of the household, rushed into the room and flung himself on the mad wretch. His long fingers encircled her throat. "Dip it!" he curtly commanded. "Dip gun!" For a few moments the woman struggled, then the revolver fell to the floor, and Nora snatched it up.

Woo turned the gasping, hiccupping creature to the door and flung her out upon the ground. "You drunk. Go home. Stop home. Me sabbe you—you sabbe me," he said as he bent above her.

Ann interposed. "Don't hurt her, Woo."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PUNISHMENT FOR BROWNSVILLE

President Issues Orders For Abandonment of Fort Because Texas Would Not Put Up With Negro Soldiers.

Fort Worth, Sept. 5.—Orders have been received at Brownsville from Washington for the immediate abandonment of Fort Brown. Contracts for extending and improving the Fort, which were well under way, have been annulled. There is a great indignation in Brownsville over the government's action.

HOKE SMITH NOMINATED.

Macon, Ga., Sept. 4.—The unanimous nomination of Hoke Smith for Governor of Georgia and the endorsement of Wm. Jennings Bryan for President in 1908, was the principal business transacted today by the Democratic State Convention. The names of other candidates for Governor were not placed before the Convention.

The platform adopted many radical recommendations and substitutes the majority vote in primaries for nominating conventions in gubernatorial contests. The State railroad commission is severely criticised, while two-cent railroad fares, State railroad control, lower freight rates, negro disfranchisement and increase in the size of the State Senate is demanded.

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years, doctors pronounced it a local disease and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment pronounced it incurable. Science has proven Catarrh to be a constitutional disease and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials.

Address, F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio.

Sold by Druggists, 75c.

Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

*A bath cleanses the skin and rid the pores of refuse. A bath makes for better fellowship and citizenship. Not only should the outside of the body be cleansed, but occasional use of a laxative or cathartic opens the bowels and clears the system of effete matter. Best for this are De Witt's Little Early Risers. Pleasant little pills that do not gripe or sicken. Sold by all druggists.

Rev. J. Grant Walker, the well known Pittsburg reform minister, has accepted the call to the Hough Avenue church, Cleveland, O., to begin his work there early in September. He is a graduate of Franklin and Marshall College.

Pain From a Burn Promptly Relieved by Chamberlain's Pain Balm.

*A little child of Mrs. Michael Strauss of Vernon, Conn., was recently in great pain from a burn on the hand and as cold applications only increased the inflammation, Mr. Strauss came to Mr. James N. Nichols, a local merchant, for something to stop the pain. Mr. Nichols says: "I advised him to use Chamberlain's Pain Balm, and the first application drew out the inflammation and gave immediate relief. I have used this liniment myself and recommend it very often for cuts, burns, strains and lame back, and have never known it to disappoint." For sale by all druggists.

Home Endorsement.

Hundreds of Sumter Citizens Can Tell You All About It.

Home endorsement, the public expression of Sumter people, should be evidence beyond dispute for every Sumter reader. Surely the experience of friends and neighbors, cheerfully given by them, will carry more weight than the utterances of strangers residing in far-away places. Read the following:

Geo. Ingram, farmer, well-known in Sumter, says: "I believe you have a most valuable medicine for backache, for I never had anything do me so much good as Doan's Kidney Pills which I procured at Dr. A. J. China's Drug Store. My back has caused me a lot of suffering. I did not know that it was my kidneys that I had malaria all through my system for they ached so. The aching extended all up and down my back, clear into my shoulders and down my legs. I do not think I had a spot about me where the pain did not strike and every once in a while I had a dull gnawing kind of a pain across the small of my back and then again sharp shooting pains all over. I used numerous remedies and made-shifts but found nothing to do me any good. The kidney secretions became dark and strong and looked like liver when left to stand and get cold. They were too frequent in action and disturbed my rest nights. The first night after I used Doan's Kidney Pills I told my wife I felt better. I thought it might be imagination until after using the pills a couple of